

Remarks:

Reconsideration of this application in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested. Claims 1-13 are pending. Claims 14-19 have been withdrawn from further consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention and have, therefore, been cancelled without prejudice to their further prosecution in a continuation application. Claims 1-13 presently stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious for the reasons of record. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's obviousness determination and respectfully traverses this ground of rejections.

As an initial matter, however, Applicant notes that restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. § 121:

- I. Claims 1-13, drawn to a method of producing a hollow composite article, classified in class 264, subclass 511.
- II. Claims 14-18, drawn to a method of producing a hollow composite article, classified in class 264, subclass 511.
- III. Claim 19, drawn to a hollow composite article, classified in class 428, subclass 36.9.

During a telephone conversation with the Examiner on April 27, 2006 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-13. Applicant hereby affirms that election.

With regards to the obviousness rejections, the Examiner has rejected claims 1, 5, 6 and 8-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,458,306 to Nelson *et al.* in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,264,868 to Marchant. In this regard, the Examiner reached the following conclusions:

Nelson *et al.* do not teach that the mandrel has recesses that are complementary to the integrally associated inserts (core, structural insert, or veneer pieces), nor does Nelson *et al.* teach applying the inserts into recesses in the mandrel as part of the method. However, Marchant teaches an analogous method for forming a hollow composite article wherein the mandrel (called a core by Marchant) comprises several elements/inserts positioned within the core to be used for forming geometrically complex cavities within the hollow part (col. 8, lines 25-33).

Therefore it would have been *prima facie* obvious to combine the methods taught by Nelson *et al.* and Marchant to produce a hollow composite with inserts because Nelson *et al.* discloses that inserts may be integrated within

the hollow composite (col. 16, lines 44-45) but does not provide specifics on how to perform that step. One of ordinary skill would have been motivated to find a teaching for integrating an insert into the hollow article while still being able to realize the benefits of the method taught by Nelson et al. The method taught by Marchant would have been an obvious choice due to it being highly analogous to the method of Nelson et al. while providing the necessary detail lacking in the method of Nelson et al. As such, the claimed invention as a whole is rendered obvious over the combined teaching of the prior art.

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With regards to the Examiner's reasoning, Applicant agrees with the Examiner's contention that U.S. Patent No. 6,458,306 to Nelson *et al.* does not teach or otherwise suggest (1) the use of a mandrel having one or more selectively positioned recesses that are complementary to one or more core, structural insert, or veneer pieces, and (2) the positioning of one or more core, structural insert, or veneer pieces adjacent and proximate to one or more selectively positioned recesses of a mandrel. To cure these deficiencies, the Examiner relies on the teachings of U.S. Patent No. 6,264,868 to Marchant. More specifically, the Examiner contends that Marchant teaches a method for forming a hollow composite article "wherein the mandrel (called a core by Marchant) comprises several elements/inserts positioned within the core." *Id.* Assuming *arguendo* that the Examiner's contention has merit, Applicant nevertheless fails to see how a mandrel/core made of several elements/inserts positioned within the mandrel/core is relevant to the method of the claimed invention. On the contrary, a mandrel/core made of several elements/inserts is nonanalogous to a mandrel having one or more selectively positioned recesses; moreover, such a structure has nothing to do with the positioning of one or more core, structural insert, or veneer pieces adjacent and proximate to one or more selectively positioned recesses. Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's syllogism in this regard is flawed.

A careful analysis of U.S. Patent No. 6,264,868 to Marchant reveals that, in relevant part, it teaches the following:

Accordingly, a core [mandrel] 11 may comprise several elements subsequently positioned one against the other and fitted as called for with mutual positioning and bonding means in order to constitute geometrically

complex cavities or cavities that differ excessively from the [aforementioned] spherical or cubic.


U.S. Patent No. 6,264,868 to Marchant at col. 8, lines 25-33.

Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would construe this passage to mean that different core shapes (*i.e.*, non-spherical or non-cubic shapes) may be bonded together to form a combination core having a complex geometry. Contrary to the Examiner's position, this passage does not teach or suggest a mandrel having one or more selectively positioned recesses; nor does it teach or suggest the positioning of one or more core, structural insert, or veneer pieces adjacent and proximate to one or more selectively positioned recesses of a mandrel. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's obviousness rejections in this regard be withdrawn.

In addition, the Examiner has also rejected (1) claims 2-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,458,306 to Nelson *et al.* in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,264,868 to Marchant and U.S. Patent No. 6,406,659 to Lang *et al.*, and (2) claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,458,306 to Nelson *et al.* in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,264,868 to Marchant and U.S. Patent No. 6,399,199 to Fujino *et al.* Because these rejections are also predicated on a flawed understanding of U.S. Patent No. 6,264,868 to Marchant, they too are inappropriate and must also be withdrawn.

In view of the above remarks allowance of claims 1-13 is earnestly solicited. A good faith effort has been made to place this application in condition for allowance. If any further matter requires attention prior to allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at (206) 568-3100 to resolve the same.

Respectfully submitted,



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